



Hieroglyphics: the NSU University School Literary Magazine

Volume 21 *Voices*

Article 23

5-1-2015

Beets

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Recommended Citation

Linkewer, Joel (2015) "Beets," *Hieroglyphics: the NSU University School Literary Magazine*: Vol. 21, Article 23.
Available at: http://nsuworks.nova.edu/uschool_litmag/vol21/iss1/23

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Stephenie Meyer

I read carefully through the ingredients of various Kool-Aid knockoffs, looking for anything that sounded familiar, let alone palatable. It seemed that most centered around water with colored, sparkly sugar and children as willing volunteers; the knockoff ingredients also seemed like constructs created to explain away the deep red stains on young children's clothes.

On the cover of one box was what appeared to be a beautiful, pale-skinned human. A speech bubble rested between his nose and exposed fang, broadcasting the words, "Once we taste Kool-Aid or even smell it for that matter, it becomes very hard to keep from feeding. Sometimes impossible."

John Steinbeck

I watched the grocery stocker from around the salad dressing shelves. I asked him calmly, "Do you have any ranch dressing?"

"Well, we ain't got any," the stocker exploded. "Whatever we ain't got, that's what you want. God a'mighty, if I was alone, my job would be so easy. I could go get a case of thousand island dressing. I could go do my job an' work, an' no trouble. No mess at all, and when the end of the month come I would take my fifty bucks and go into town and get as much ranch as I want. Why, I could stay in a ranch factory all night. I could eat it with whatever I want, celery or anything, and get as much of the damn thing as I could think of. An' I could do all that every damn month, get a gallon of ranch."

"I was only foolin', mister. I don't want no ranch dressing. I wouldn't buy no ranch if it was right here beside me."

"If it was here, you could have some."

"But I wouldn't buy none. I'd leave it all for you. You could cover your celery or chicken wings or paycheck with it and I wouldn't touch none of it."

Joseph Heller

There was only one catch, and that was rainbow trout, which specified that 2" thick filets be cooked 11 minutes on each side and eaten with Morton's fork and a knife. The catch was delicious and could be eaten. All it had to do was bake; and as soon as it was cooked, it could no longer be eaten as sushi and would have to accompany a lemon butter sauce and rice pilaf. I would be crazy to cook it and sane if I didn't, but if I was sane I'd probably get food poisoning. If I cooked the trout, I was crazy and didn't have to; but if I didn't want to I was sane, and had to.

"That's some catch, that rainbow trout," I observed.

"It's the best there is," the enemy behind the seafood counter agreed.

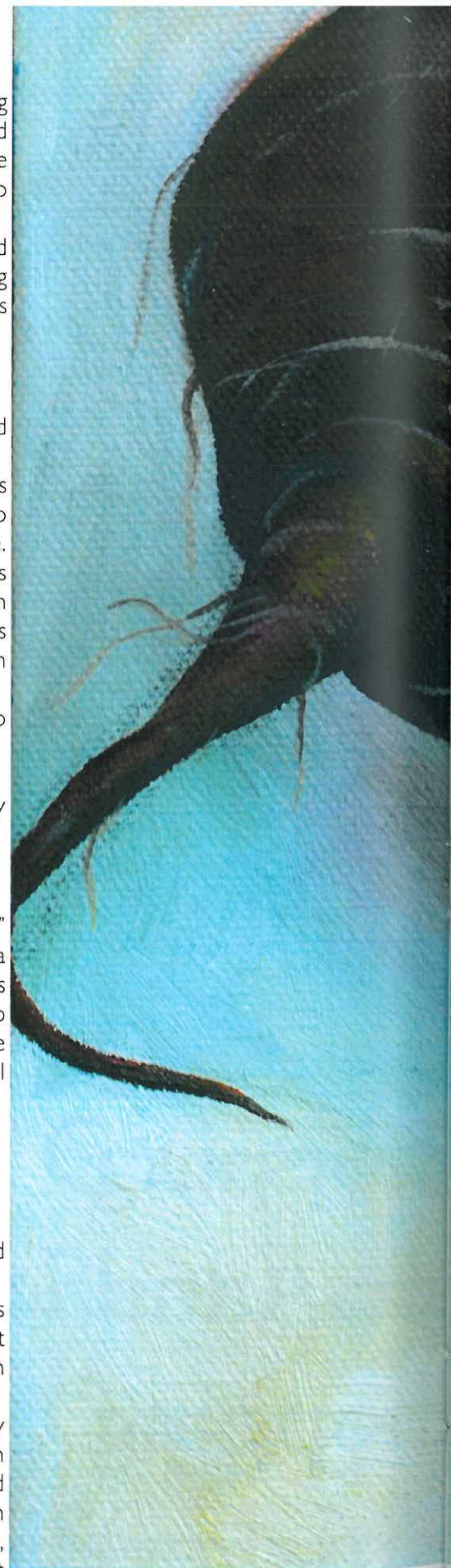
Charlotte Brontë

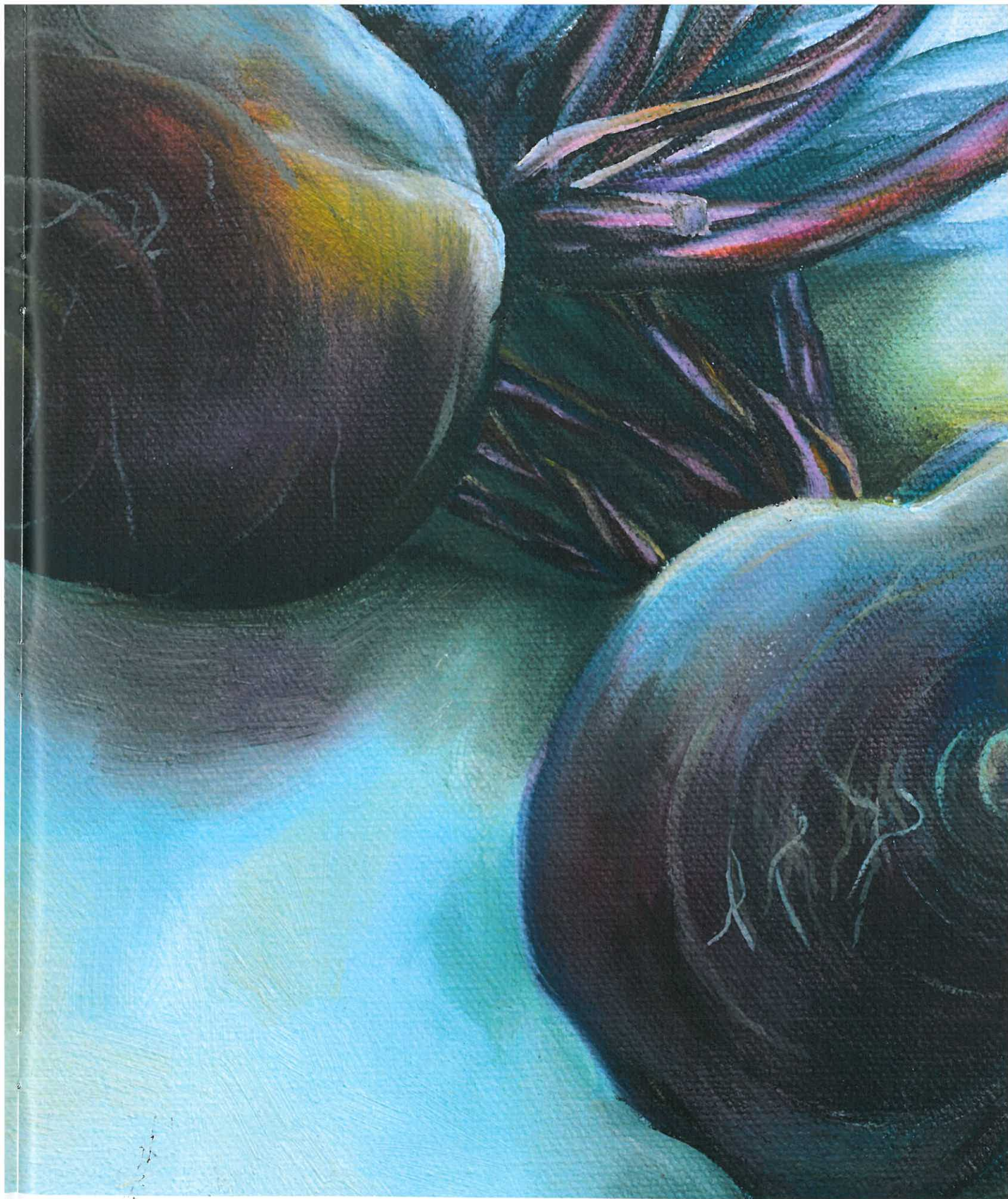
At eight, Sophie came to dress me. I raised my head, and looking round and seeing the incline rise of the eastern sun on the wall, I asked, "What am I to do?"

The answer that my mind gave—"Buy more Nutella"—was so prompt, so dire. It does good to no woman to be flattered by a chocolate-hazelnut spread which does not intend to marry her; and it is madness in all women to let a secret love kindle within them, which, if unreturned and unknown, must devour the life it feeds.

Nutella, I have little left in my cupboard—I must have you. The world may laugh—may call me absurd, selfish—but it does not signify. My very soul and stomach demand you: it will be satisfied, or it will take deadly vengeance on its frame. I had not intended to love you; the reader knows I had wrought hard to extirpate from my soul the germs of love there detected; and now, at the first renewed view of it, they spontaneously revived, great and strong! Nutella made me love it without looking at me.

Reader, I married it.





Detail from *Beets*, by Joel Linkewer